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REMARKS

Claims 1 and 4, as amended, remain herein.

Claims 1 and 4 have been amended to recite the flow regulation portion comprises a cassette mechanism comprising a detachable inner portion for regulating flow of material being extruded therethrough, and said cassette mechanism is detachable from said ceramic honeycomb extrusion apparatus without removal of said diameter expanding portion. See applicants' specification, at page 5, lines 24-25.

This Amendment places all claims 1 and 4 in condition for allowance, and surely in better condition for any appeal. Thus, entry of this Amendment and allowance of all claims 1 and 4 are respectfully requested.

1. Claims 1 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over applicants' admitted prior art (AAPA) and Ziegler U.S. Patent 4,770,624.

The presently claimed ceramic honeycomb extrusion apparatus and method for using such apparatus including a detachable cassette mechanism including a detachable inner portion for

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regulating flow of material being extruded therethrough, and the cassette mechanism is detachable from the ceramic honeycomb extrusion apparatus without removal of the diameter expanding portion. This arrangement and corresponding method for using this arrangement are nowhere disclosed or suggested in the cited reference.

The Office Action admits that the AAPA does not teach the flow regulation portion including the cassette mechanism recited in applicants' claims 1 and 4, and cites Ziegler '624 as allegedly teaching same. The Office Action argues that Ziegler '624 allegedly discloses choke sleeve 70 threaded at 72 in engagement with rotatable collar 74 within extension 76 of extruder tube 64, wherein an inner portion of sleeve 70 and rotatable collar 74 allegedly can be attached or detached. The Office Action argues that Ziegler '624 discloses portions 70 and 74 as being detachable because they are disclosed as being separate and distinct elements, and can be dismantled and assembled via threaded portions and seals. However, Ziegler '624, Fig. 4 shows additional components 78, 76 and 74 that must be removed first, i.e., Ziegler '624 discloses removal of the

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diameter expanding portion of the extrusion apparatus. Ziegler '624 does not disclose a detachable cassette mechanism including a detachable inner portion for regulating flow of material being extruded therethrough, the cassette mechanism being detachable from the ceramic honeycomb extrusion apparatus without removal of the diameter expanding portion, as recited in applicants' claims 1 and 4.

For the foregoing reasons, neither the AAPA nor Ziegler '624 contains any teaching, suggestion, reason, motivation or incentive that would have led one of ordinary skill in the art to applicants' claimed invention. Nor is there any disclosure or teaching in either of these references that would have suggested the desirability of combining any portions thereof effectively to anticipate or suggest applicants' presently claimed invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

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All claims 1 and 4 are now proper in form and patentably distinguished over all grounds of rejection stated in the Office Action. Accordingly, allowance of all claims 1 and 4 is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action by the applicants would be desirable to place this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is requested to telephone applicants' undersigned representatives.

Respectfully submitted,

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